

# Behaviour change in rural areas primary research consultation report

Cycling UK

August 2023

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## 1. Executive summary

In summer 2023, Cycling UK conducted primary research on behalf of West Devon Borough Council and South Hams District Council to understand the views of local people around walking, wheeling (using mobility scooters or wheelchairs) and cycling for local journeys. Data collected included 1,599 valid survey responses, 9 interviews with organisations representing “harder to reach” groups and three public events.

Survey responses overrepresented women, older people and cyclists. It underrepresented young people, disabled people and those without a bike. However, the large response size allows for useful disaggregation and informative findings.

### **Walking/wheeling to get around is normalised, positive and welcomed in the community.**

- 78% of survey respondents made regular use of walking/wheeling as a mode of transport
- Over 90% agree walking/wheeling is good for individual health and the environment
- 78% agree (16% neutral) that their area would be a better place if more people walked/wheeled
- Around 7 in 10 respondents felt that they lived a walkable/wheelable distance from local shops, public transport links and green space. Only 51% felt they were a walkable/wheelable distance from friends or family.

### **Cycling is positively or neutrally viewed, even by non-cyclists.**

- Non-cyclists thought that cycling was good for health (84%) and the environment (74%)
- Only 55% of non-cyclists thought their area would be a better place if more people cycled. However, a further 26% were neutral. This indicates less public support than for walking, but the majority are not in opposition to increasing local cycling
- 45% of non-cyclists would consider cycling for local journeys.

### **Safety is a key barrier to more walking, wheeling and cycling, due to high traffic volumes, high speeds and lack of space.**

- 78% of respondents said roads where they lived felt unsafe for walking/wheeling
- 81% of both cyclists and non-cyclists felt the roads were unsafe for cycling
- Not feeling safe and having fewer route or transport options reduced peoples’ choices and quality of life, especially for more vulnerable community members.

Other significant barriers for people walking/wheeling and cycling more of their local journeys were logistics (carrying shopping etc), distance and hilliness. An enabler of more active travel, alongside traffic reduction and connected safe routes, was more route knowledge. For cycling specifically, access to bikes and storage and improving cycling confidence were also relevant.

This data will inform the behaviour change strategy being led by Cycling UK and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) being led by Phil Jones Associates on behalf of both Councils.

## 2. Introduction

In summer 2023, Cycling UK conducted primary research on behalf of West Devon Borough Council and South Hams District Council to understand the views of local people around walking and cycling for local journeys.

Almost 1,600 local residents responded to an online survey shared through town and parish councillors, both councils, local community newsletters and online forums. Interviews were conducted with local organisations that worked with or represented particular cohorts of residents who were identified by the Councils and Cycling UK as being typically underrepresented in walking and cycling opinion data and/or having specific mobility needs. These included children and young people, families, disabled people, older people, people experiencing poverty, residents of West Devon and women. Three public events were held in locations that would target those “harder to reach” groups to gather data in person through accessible activities and face to face conversations.

This report provides the summary of the online survey data, with an overview of the data collection through interviews and events. The full analysis of all three elements will inform the behaviour change strategy being led by Cycling UK and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) being led by Phil Jones Associates on behalf of both Councils.

## 2 Public survey data

We received 1599 responses from people who lived, worked and/or volunteered in South Hams and West Devon.

### 2.1 Demographics

We asked respondents for a short range of demographic characteristics to get a sense of whether we have reached across different communities in the local area. These questions were all voluntary.

- 61% (791 people) of respondents were over 55, with 34% (437 people) over 65. This is an overrepresentation of older age groups, as 28% of the total population in this region are over 65<sup>1</sup>

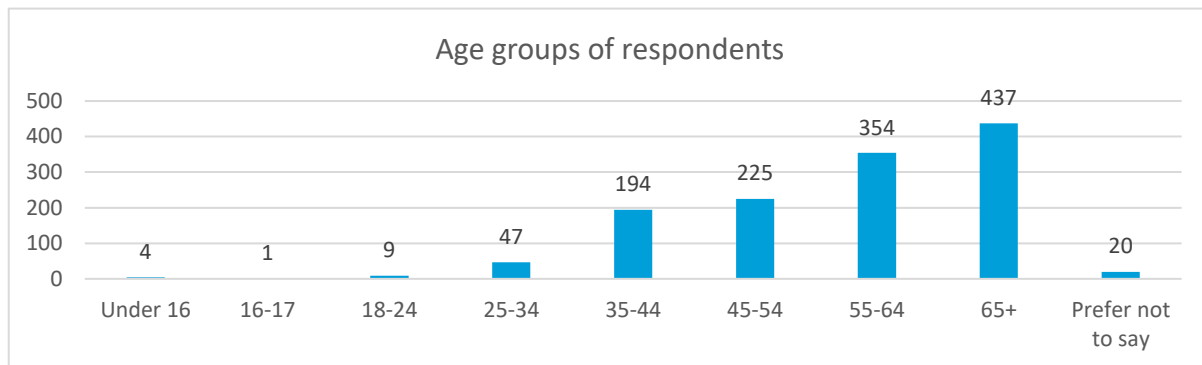


Figure 1 Age groups

- 57% female, 42% male
- 97% White ethnicities
- 98% straight or heterosexual
- 9% disabled, compared to around 17% of the total population in England.<sup>2</sup>

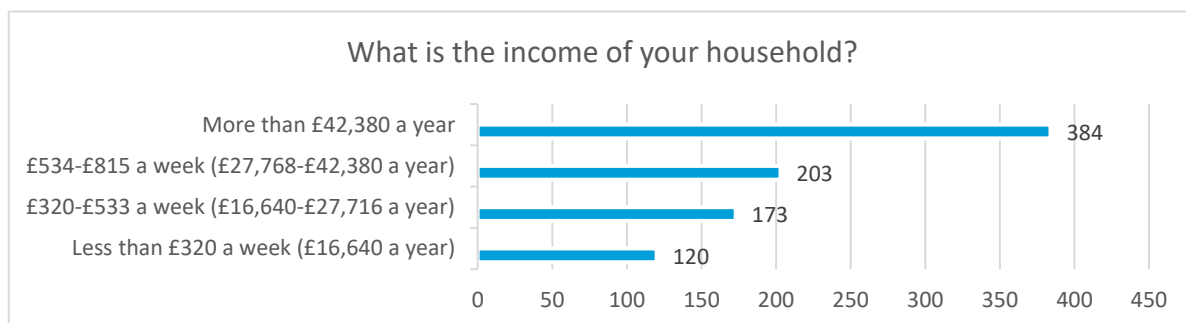


Figure 2 Household income

70% of respondents opted to share their household income levels, the data suggests the responses overrepresent wealthier households but still contain significant numbers of households from below average incomes. Over a third were below the average household income for England (around £32,000) with around 1 in 6

<sup>1</sup> Office of National Statistics (ONS), (2021). Census 2021 Ready Made Tables [https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census\\_2021\\_rm](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2021_rm)

<sup>2</sup> Office of National Statistics (ONS), (2021). Census 2021 [Disability by age, sex and deprivation, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/disabilityandlongtermhealth/bulletins/census2021/disabilitybyagesexanddeprivationenglandandwales)

respondents (120 people) below the threshold for the average “low income” households.<sup>3</sup>

## 2.2 Access to private transport

Survey respondents were more likely to have access to both motor vehicles and cycles than average in the area.

- 28% of respondents did not own a bike or cycle, compared to the England average of 53%<sup>4</sup>
- 4% lived in households with no car or van. England average in rural areas is 5%<sup>5</sup>, but the 2021 Census for South Hams and West Devon found 12% of local households did not have access to a car or van.
- 60% lived in households with 2 or more car/vans. The National Travel Survey found 58% of households in rural areas across England have access to two or more cars, in South Hams and West Devon the figure was 48% in the 2021 census.<sup>6</sup>

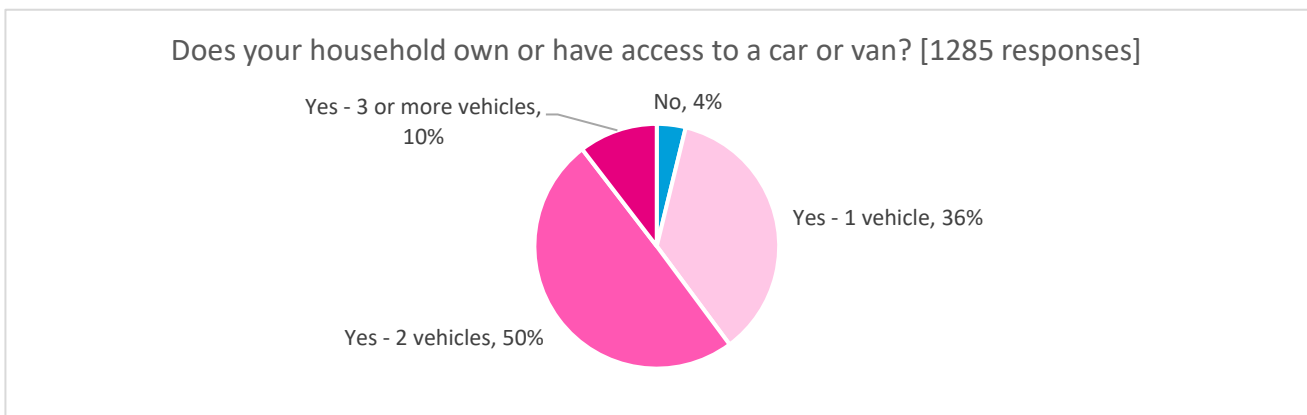


Figure 3 Car and van ownership

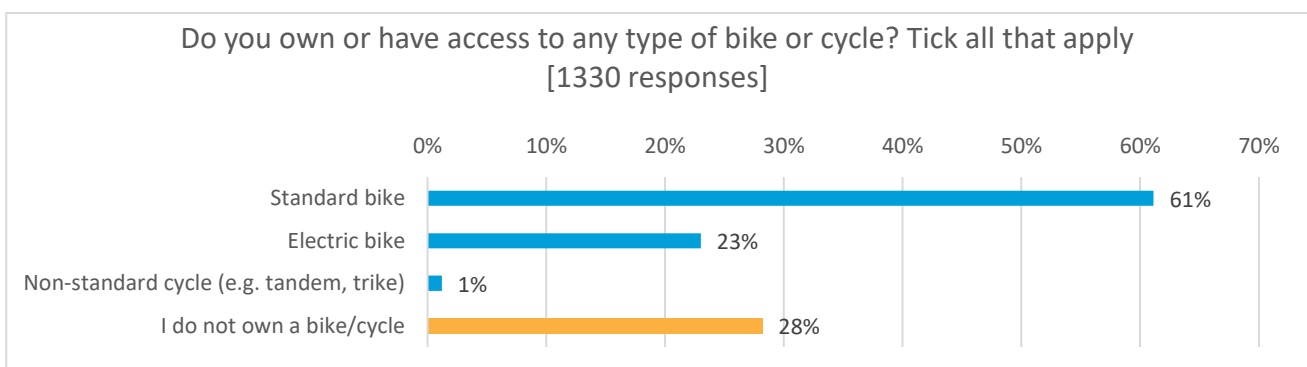


Figure 4 Cycle ownership

<sup>3</sup> Exact “low income” classifications by government take into account the number of adults and children in a household, so the calculation here cannot be precise.

<sup>4</sup> [Cycling UK's Cycling Statistics | Cycling UK](#)

<sup>5</sup> [National Travel Survey 2021: Household car availability and trends in car trips - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Number of cars or vans - Census Maps, ONS](#)

### 3 Walking as a mode of transport

A strong majority (78%) of survey respondents make use of walking or wheeling (using a wheelchair or mobility scooter) as part of their normal transport habits, with 68% walking or wheeling for journeys at least once a week. Those travelling at least once a month by walking/wheeling were categorised as “walker/wheelers” within the dataset while those walking/wheeling less than once a month were categorised as “non-walker/wheelers.”

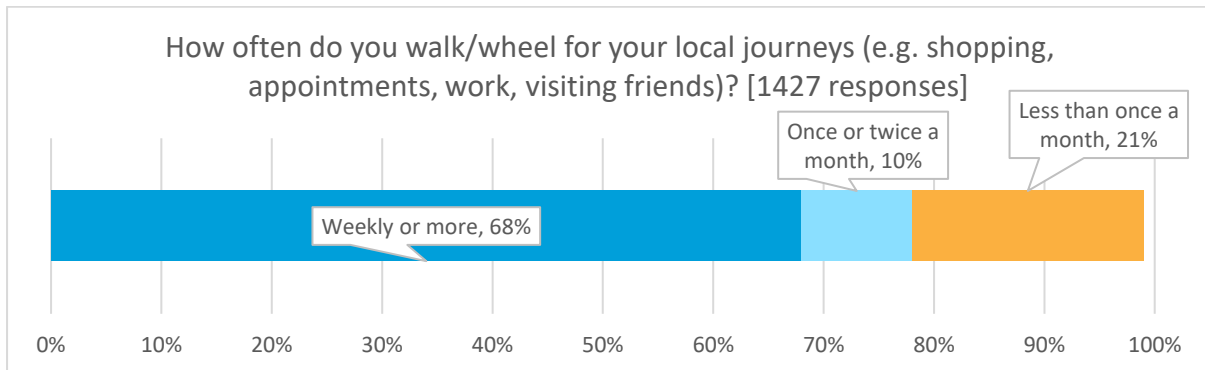


Figure 5 How often do you walk/wheel for local journeys

When disaggregated by disability, 64% of disabled people and 81% of non-disabled people walked or wheeled at least once a month. This indicates that while disabled people have more barriers to travelling actively than non-disabled people, the majority are still regularly walking or wheeling for local journeys.

#### 3.1 Positive associations with walking and wheeling

There was a positive overall association with walking/wheeling across all respondents, with 95% agreeing walking or wheeling is good for individual health, and 90% that it's positive for the environment.

95% agree "people who walk or wheel improve both their health and wellbeing"

90% agree "for the sake of the environment it would be better if more people walked or wheeled"

Figure 6 Walking/wheeling for health and the environment

This positive association continued when respondents were asked about the impact of walking and wheeling for their area, with 78% agreeing “my area would be a better place if more people walked or wheeled to get around” (16% were neutral).

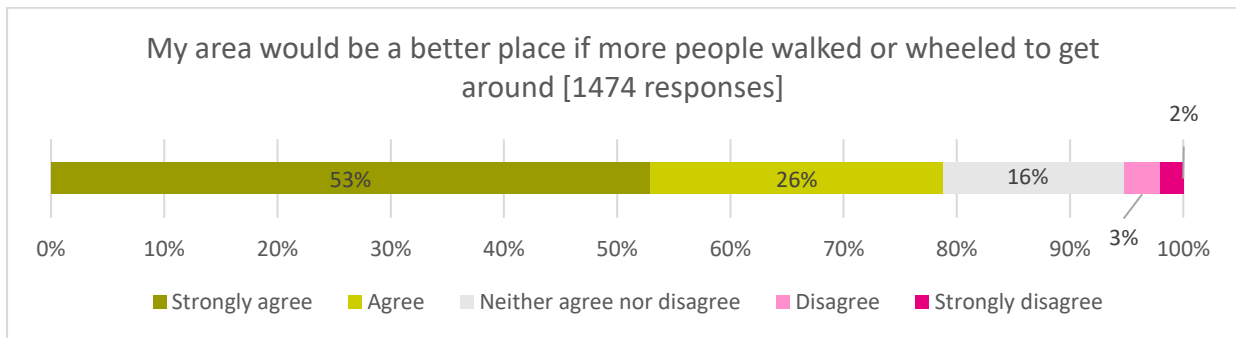


Figure 7 My area would be better with more walking and wheeling

We asked respondents whether they personally feel that they live within a walking or wheeling distance from key local services and amenities. This subjective response will take into account distance, but also peoples’ experiences of road safety, their personal expectations and their own mobility. Although most (78%) feel they live within walking distance of a shop, only half feel that they can visit a friend or family member on foot – a reference to social isolation as well as mobility – and only 30% for schools.

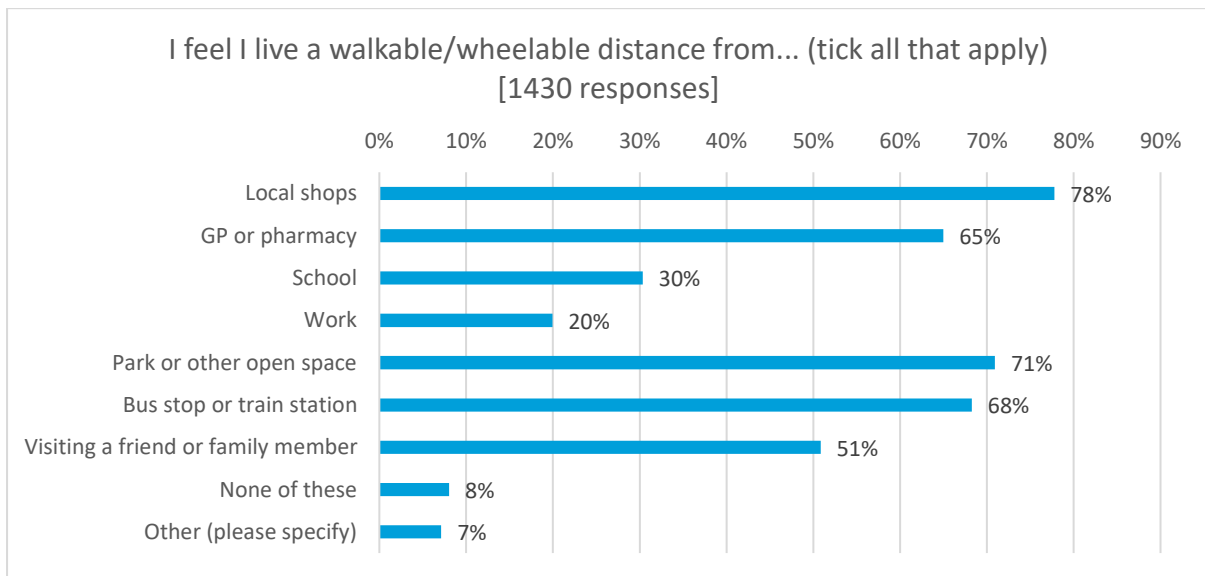


Figure 8 I feel I live a walkable/wheelable distance from...

Typical “other” responses included additional locations such as church, community centre, library, gym/leisure centre and pub. There were also some explanations of answers, such as “walking is OK – wheeling is impossible” (wheelchair user, Tavistock. Did not feel they lived a walkable/wheelable distance from any of the options) or “in one direction, not the other” (walked weekly for local journeys, also used car and public transport).

For those who walk or wheel, we asked why they choose to travel this way. Around half of the responses in “other” were around pleasure and enjoyment, with some respondents also referencing the sociability of walking and wheeling.

*“You meet people or at least interact with strangers [when walking]”*

Male, over 65, Tavistock. Car owner, low income household.



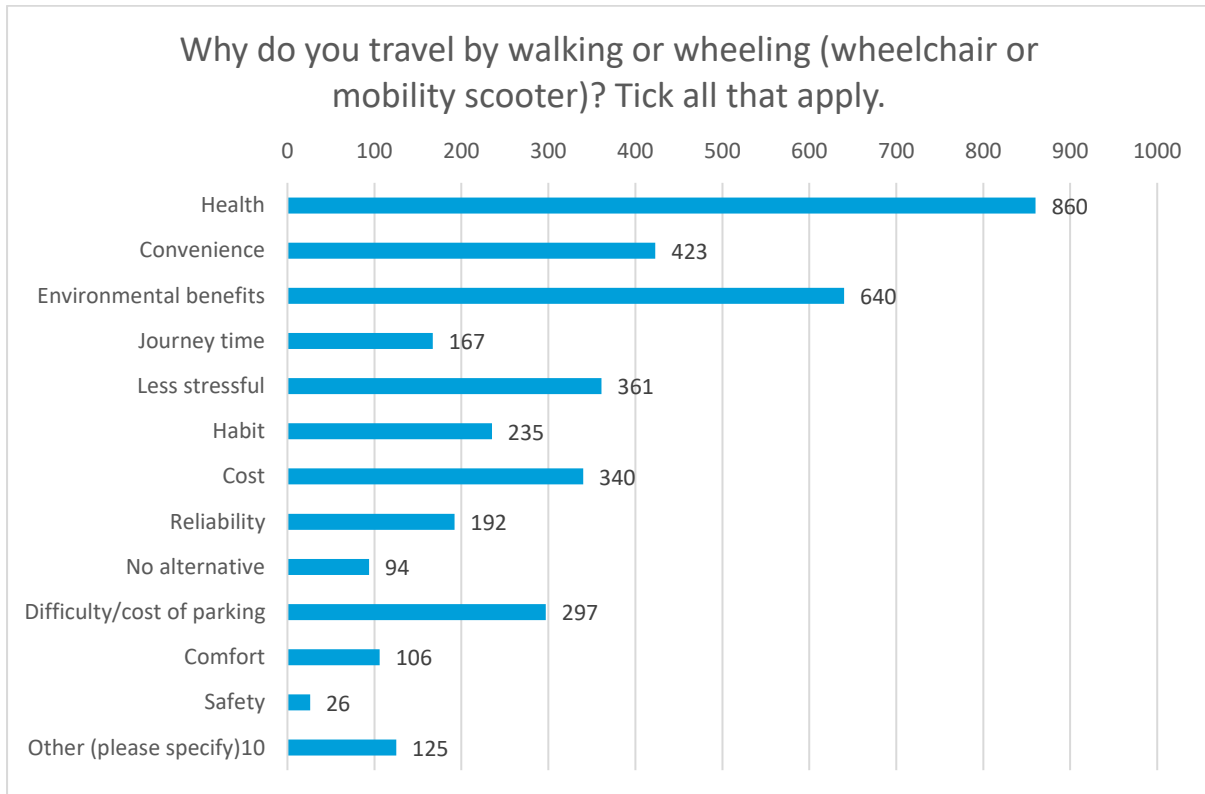


Figure 9 Why do you walk or wheel?

### 3.2 Barriers to walking and wheeling

Despite the fact that most people already used walking or wheeling for some local journeys, only 39% saw it as a practical way to get around. Understanding “impracticality” we explored specific barriers that people can experience in more detail below.

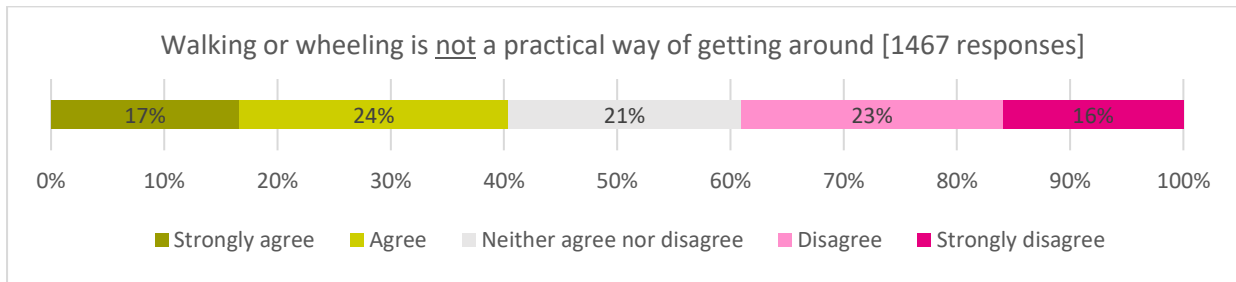


Figure 10 Walking or wheeling is not practical

We asked respondents about different barriers or issues they experienced to walking or wheeling.

Safety and logistics (distance, topography, cargo) were clear top responses for those who do not currently walk or wheel, as well as stopping those who already walk or wheel from doing more. The full response options and breakdown are below.

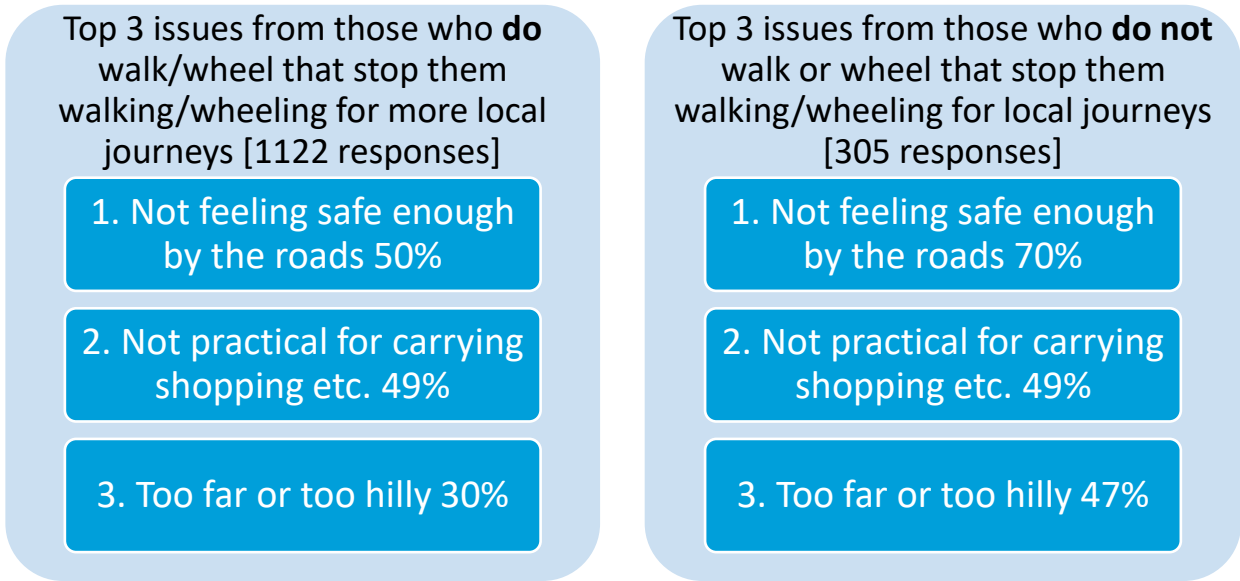
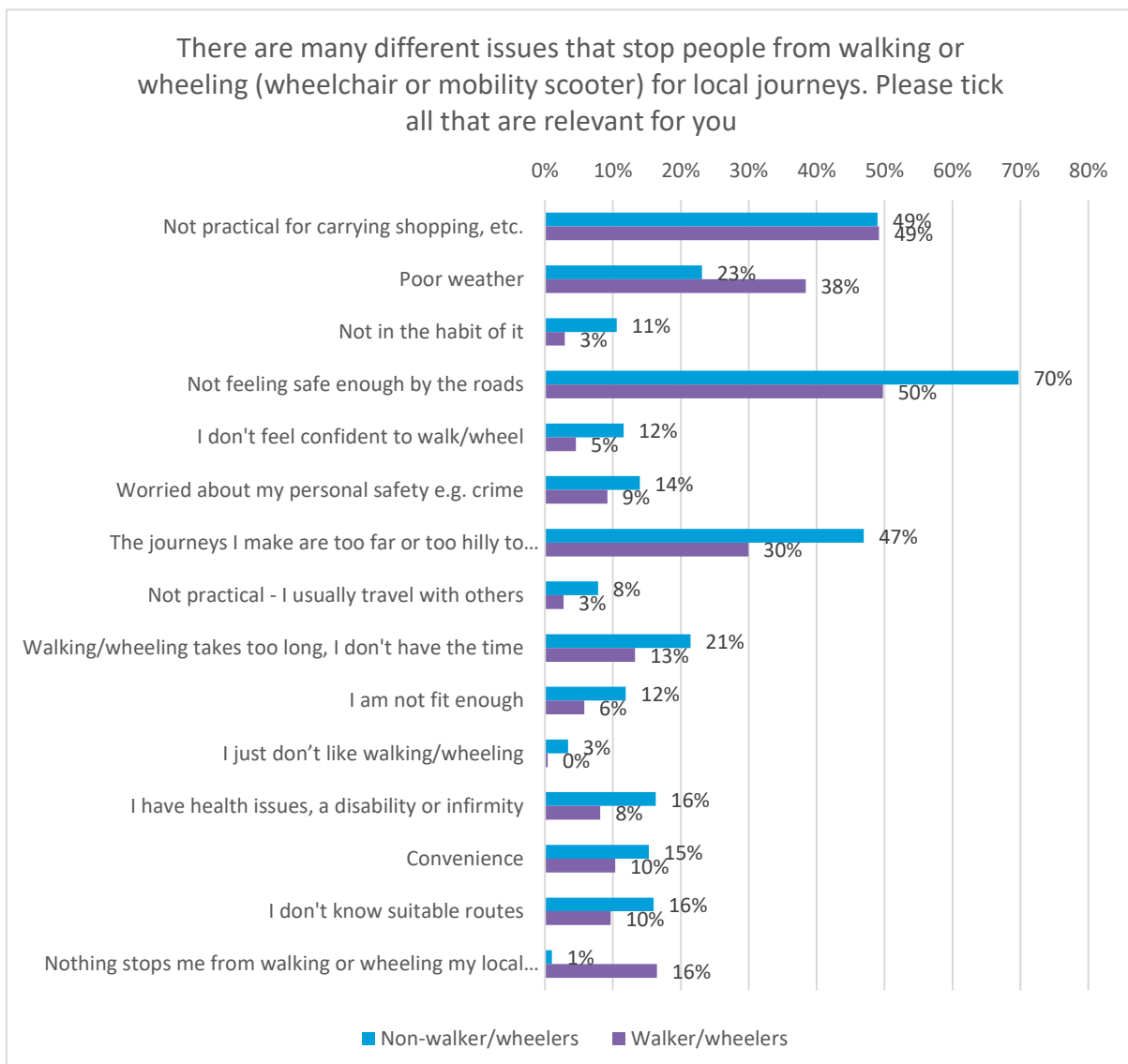


Figure 11 Top three barriers to walking or wheeling for journeys

Figure 12 All barriers to walking and wheeling



### 3.2.1 Safety

We asked a further question specifically around experiences of road safety for wheeling and walking.

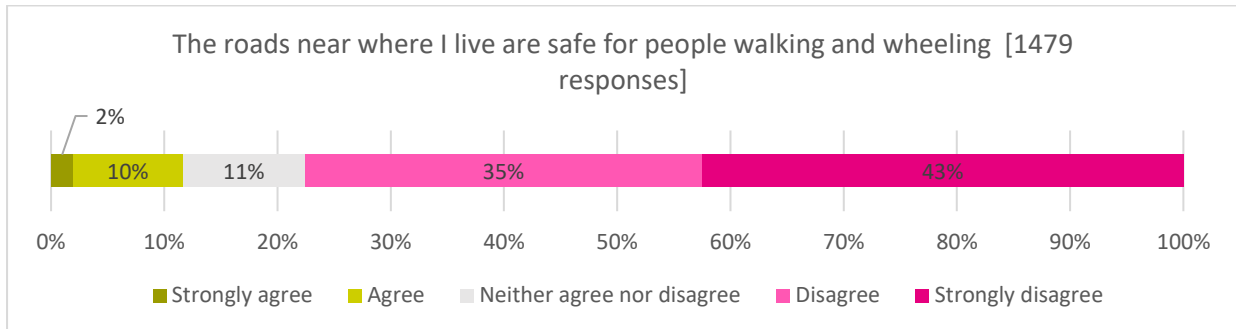


Figure 13 Roads are safe for walking and wheeling

Over 1,100 respondents left further comments about their concerns for road safety when walking or wheeling. Many spoke of traffic volumes and speeds on the roads, but also about pavement accessibility:

*“I push my twins in a double pram and my Gran rides a mobility scooter. Some pavements are too narrow or have a huge camber making it difficult to use. The lack of drop kerbs & people blocking them making crossing the roads difficult and unsafe. There are a number of pavements where residential properties have overgrown greenery which reduce the size of pavements or add additional hazards such as brambles and other items are eye level.”*

Female, 25-34 years old, South Hams. Uses car and walking for local journeys.

### 3.3 Interest in walking or wheeling

For those who were currently not walking or wheeling at least once a month for local journeys, we asked about their general interest in the possibility. 60% said it was something that they would consider, with a further 16% neutral and around a quarter opposed to the idea. This indicates significant room for behaviour change, even amongst those not currently walking or wheeling for local journeys.

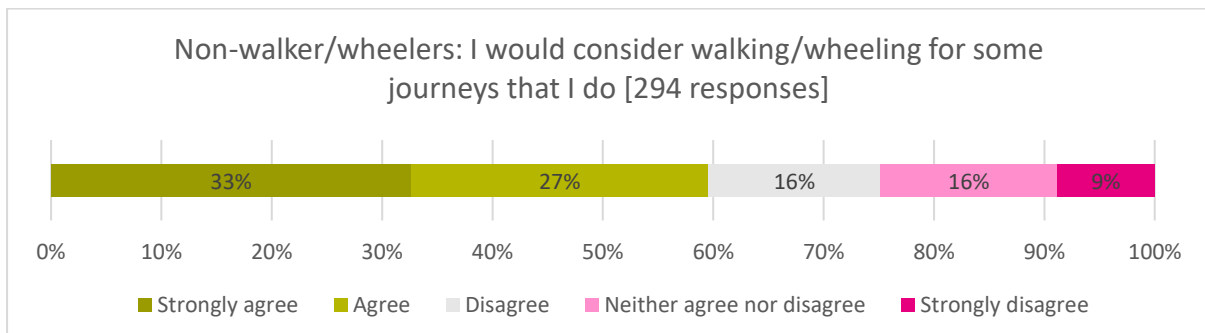


Figure 14 Non-walker/wheeler interest in walking

There was a higher number of non-walker/wheelers (72%) who saw walking or wheeling as a future possibility, even if they had not given a positive response to currently considering the option. This could be due to expecting a change in their circumstances

(children growing older, retirement etc) or that it felt easier to make commitments around future intentions than to changing current patterns. In either case, it provides more positive evidence around a willingness to consider change.

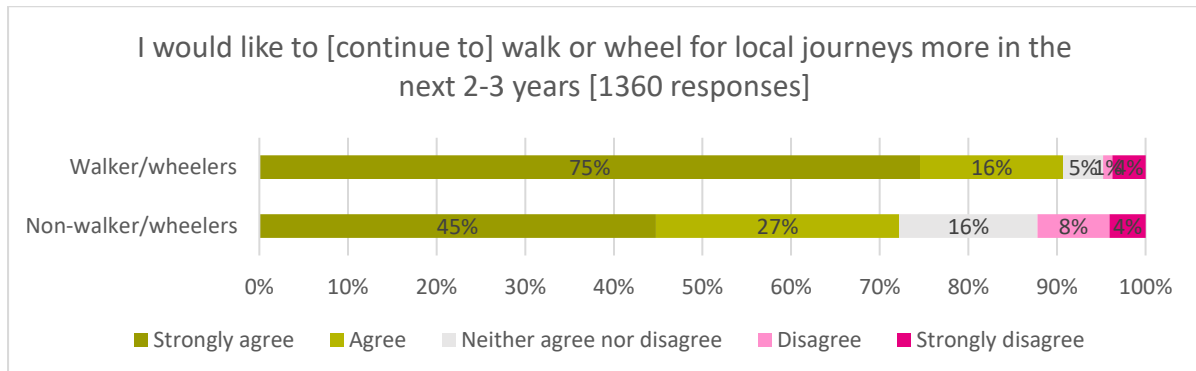


Figure 15 Intensions to walk/wheel in the future

### 3.3.1 Social norms

Walking is broadly a cultural norm in the UK, but for some people or in some communities it may feel less normalised. Responses for the region showed a generally strong social approval and normalised expectation of walking.

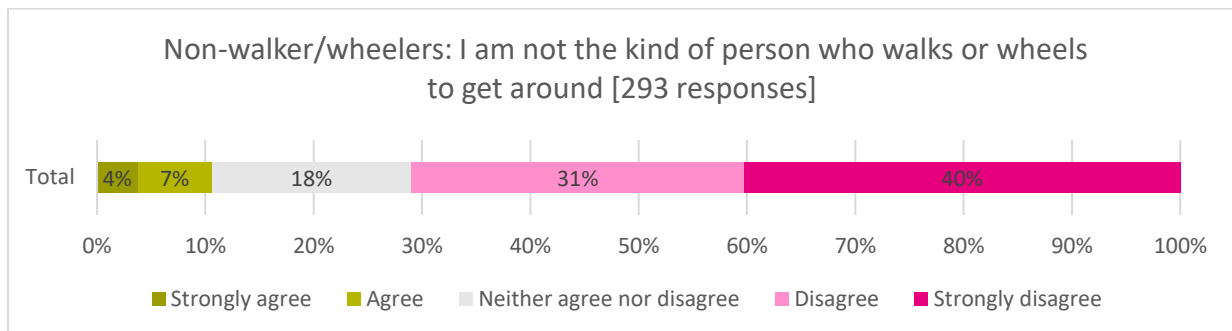


Figure 16 Non-walker/wheeler the kind of person who walks or wheels

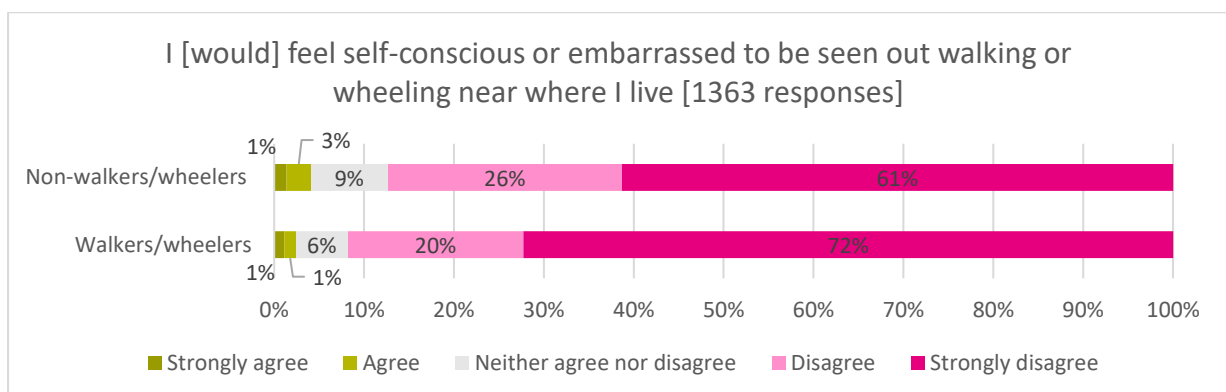


Figure 17 Self-conscious or embarrassed to walk or wheel

We did not directly ask respondents whether they typically used a wheelchair or mobility scooter so we cannot directly disaggregate this data to identify whether feelings were different for those who are wheeling rather than walking.

### 3.3.2 Enablers for walking and wheeling

Key enablers for walking and cycling were improvements in infrastructure as well as reduction in the dominance of vehicles in local spaces. Beyond that, sharing knowledge of suitable routes as well as understanding that a key motivator is health gives indications of types of support and approaches to motivating individuals that can be incorporated into local strategies and plans.

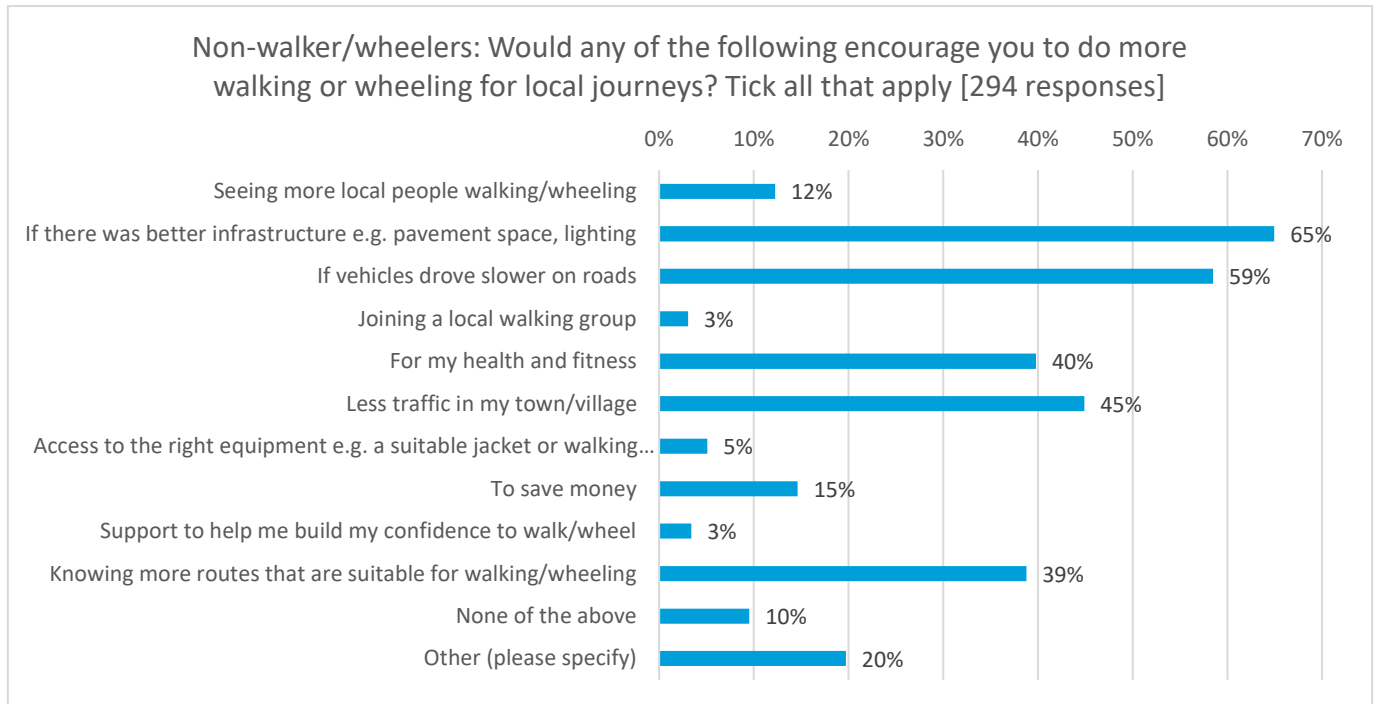


Figure 18 Non-walker/wheelers: Enablers for walking and wheeling

This multiple choice question was not directed to individuals who were already walking or wheeling for local journeys. However, existing walker/wheelers were given an open comment box to add suggestions on what would improve the local experience of walking or wheeling. We have over 1,000 responses from walker/wheelers, which follow similar themes to the 58 comments given in the “other” box for non-walker/wheelers.

Recurring themes:

- Traffic reduction and removal e.g. *“make the high street more pedestrian friendly”* and *“stop commuter traffic cutting through the town centre”* *“pedestrianise the high street”*
- Speed reductions e.g. *“20’s plenty”* *“much reduced traffic speeds”*
- More pavements and more pavement width/space
- Higher quality pavements, including dropped kerbs, flat pavements, stopping pavement parking, removing street clutter
- More pedestrian routes between settlements and better interconnected routes within
- Removing overhanging branches/shrubbery and keeping pavements cleaner
- Street lighting
- More public transport as an enabler of walking or wheeling

- Policing of anti-social behaviour and aggression
- Segregation of cycling and walking space
- Crossings and general pedestrian prioritisation
- Public toilets and benches as facilitators of walking and wheeling
- Better management of new development planning to reduce the number of extra vehicles they generate.

Some of the comments were also frequent, but were not controllable, such as:

- Topography “fewer hills”
- Individuals for whom their specific locations outside of villages meant they were too far out to be able to walk
- Misallocated comments requesting cycle facilities

## 4 Modal choice for journeys

To get an overview of respondents’ modal choices, we asked how they usually travelled for a specific types of local journeys. For each journey type (work/education; shopping and “other local journeys”) respondents could answer more than one option (figure 19).

The car was the most frequent choice for all three journey types, with between 34-51% of all respondents to the question saying they only used their car for that journey (50% for work/education; 51% for shopping; 34% for other local journeys). This leaves between 36-56% of car users also using other modes for the same journey. This breakdown is important, as it recognises that some residents are extremely car dependent for specific journeys, but also that many residents already integrate a mix of options into their daily or weekly routines.

A smaller proportion of respondents (50% in figure 19) said they walked or wheeled for general “other journeys” than had responded to the earlier direct question about whether they regularly walked or wheeled for local journeys (78% at least once a month, figure 5). This may describe situations where although walking is not the usual choice for most of a person’s “other journeys” (e.g. they think more about the car or bus journeys that they take regularly) they still walk regularly for journeys when describing their use of walking overall.

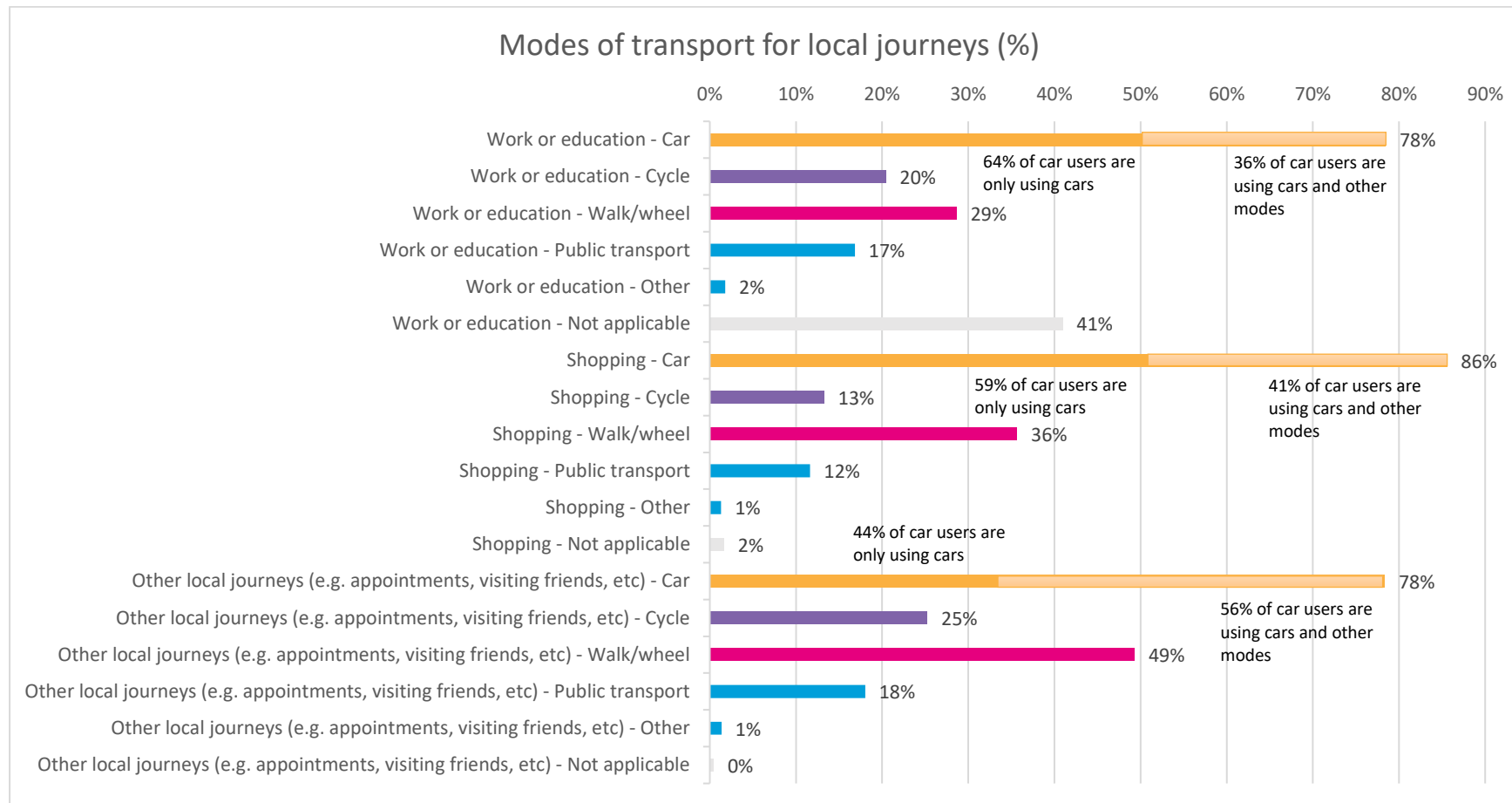


Figure 19 Modes of transport for local journeys

## 5 Cycling as a mode of transport

As cycling is often reported as a more divisive topic than walking, the following data is presented with non-cyclists and cyclist responses separately to explore the views of non-cyclists more clearly.

There was an overrepresentation of people who cycle regularly in our respondents. The survey design managed this overrepresentation by separating questions and analysis for those who do not currently cycle more than twice a year (“non-cyclists”), on the expectation that they would have limited direct experience of cycling in the area.

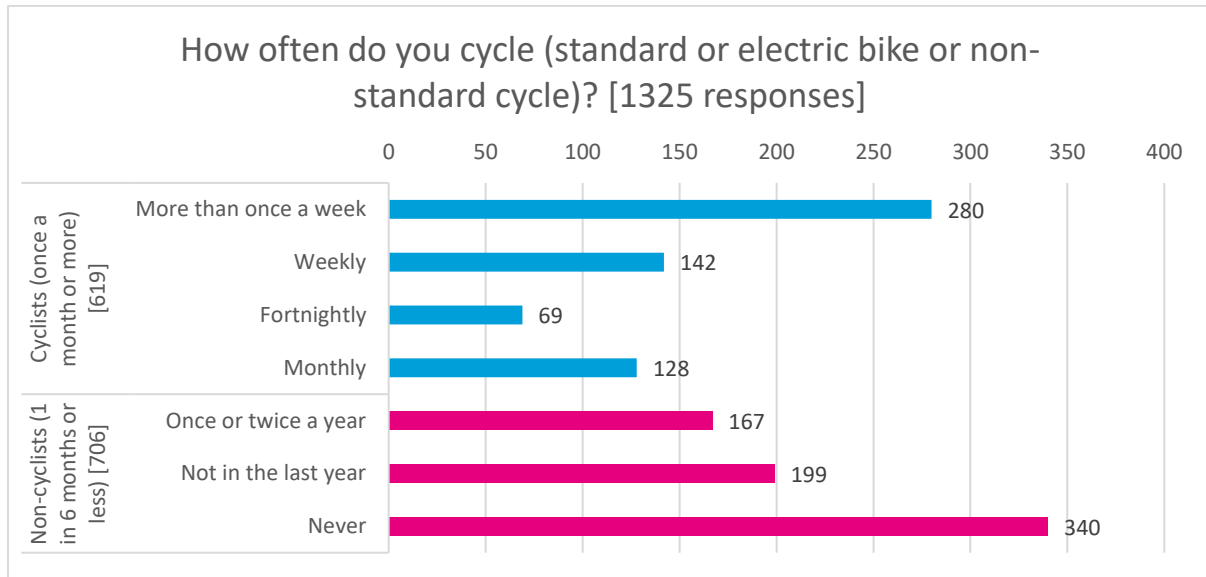


Figure 20 Frequency of cycling

Among those who cycled at least monthly, further filters were applied to separate those who already ride for local journeys (“utility cyclists”) compared to those who cycle only for leisure (“leisure cyclists”).

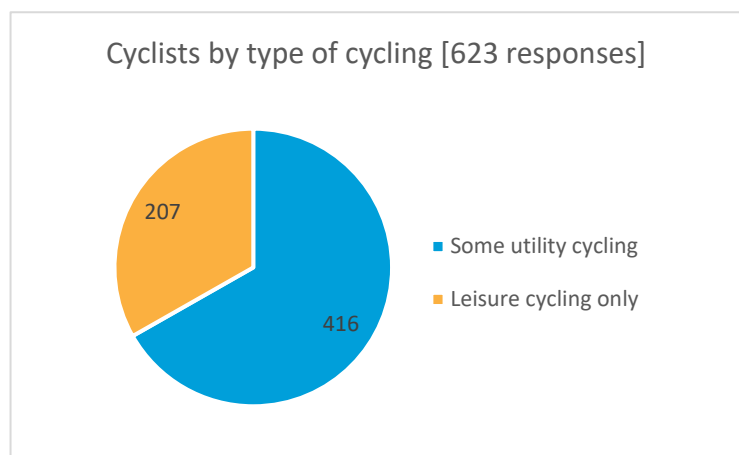


Figure 21 Type of cycling



## 5.1 Attitudes to cycling

Even among non-cyclists, 84% agree that cycling is good for individual health and 74% that it is good for the environment. Amongst the rest of non-cyclist respondents, the majority are neutral on the topics rather than holding an opposing opinion.

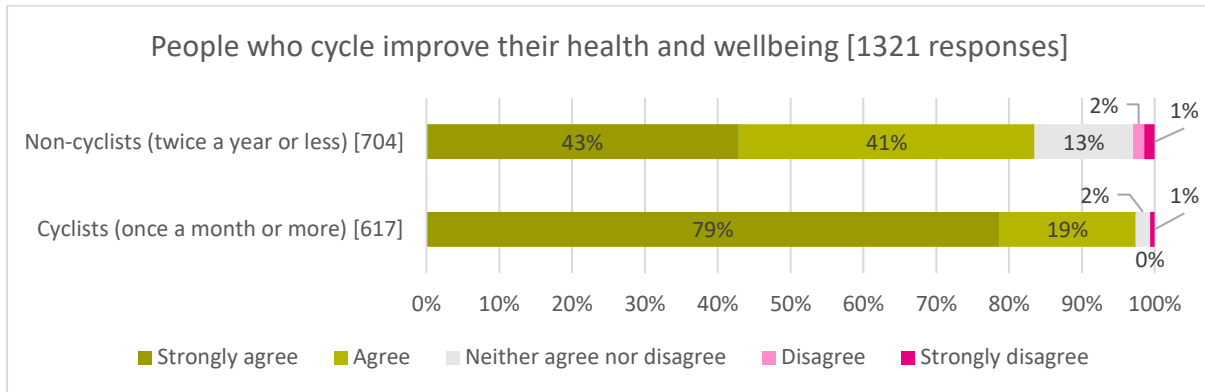


Figure 22 People who cycle improve their health and wellbeing

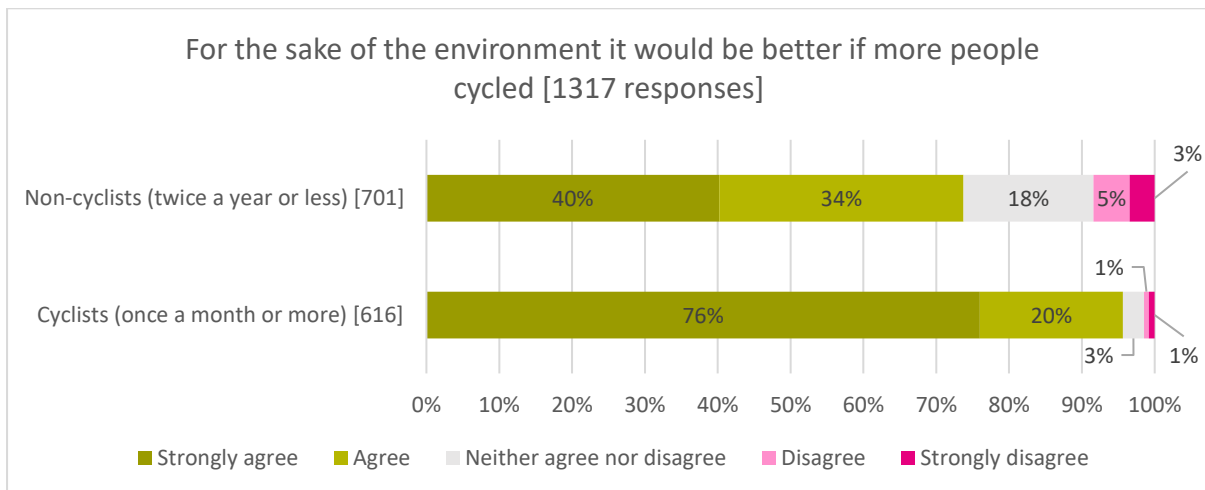


Figure 23 Cycling is good for the environment

When asked if they thought more cycling would be positive for their area, unsurprisingly those who currently cycle were keener on seeing an increase in cycling than those who do not. However, more than half of non-cyclists (55%) were in favour, with a further 26% neutral on the topic. The high level of neutrality is notable, potentially signifying that people can see both pros and cons from the idea, or that it is something they have not significantly considered. Either way, this group provides a potential audience for supporting cycling interventions. 20% of non-cyclists were opposed to the idea.

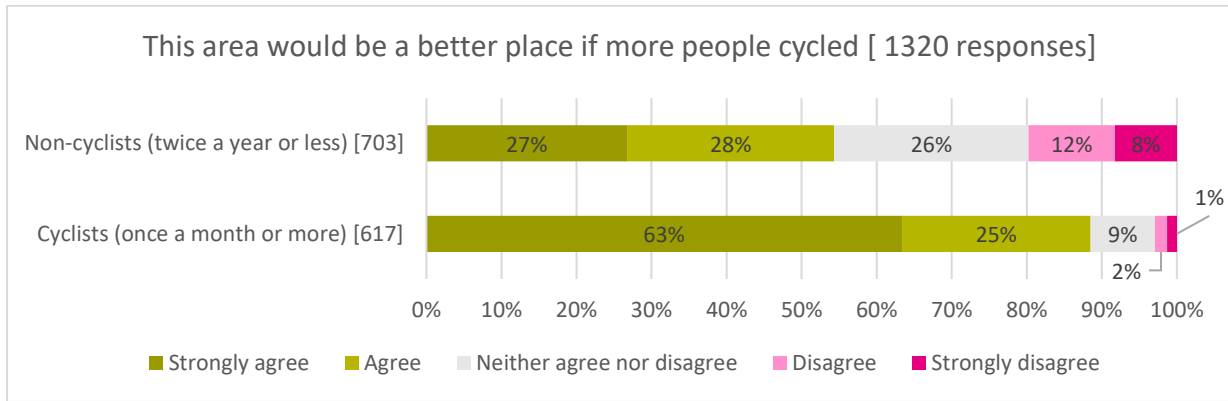


Figure 24 This area would be better if more people cycled

## 5.2 Barriers to cycling

We asked respondents about different barriers or issues they had around cycling.

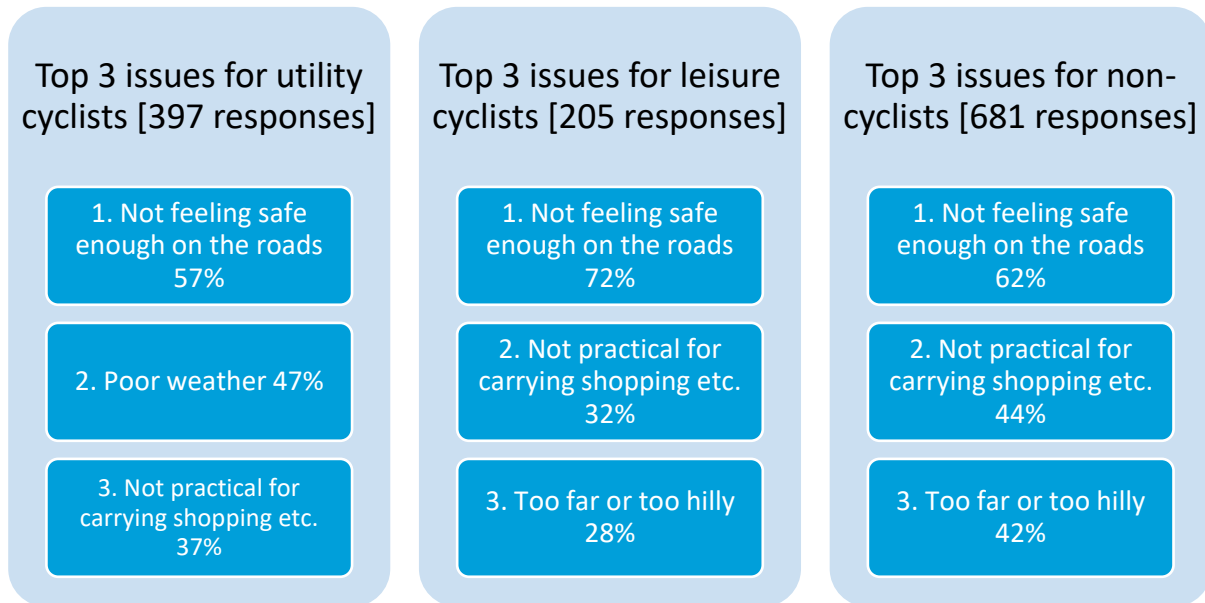
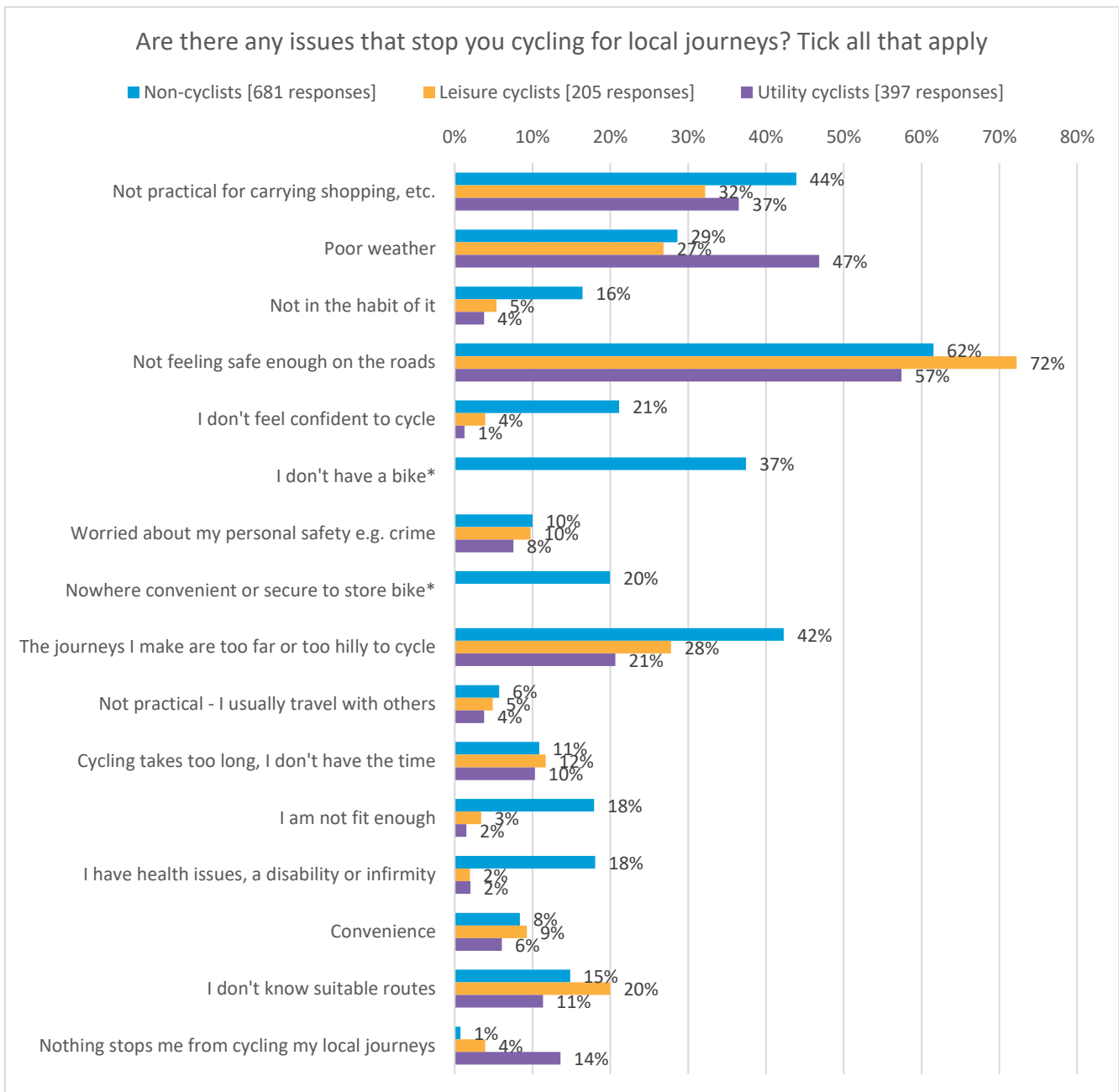


Figure 25 Top three barriers to cycling

The high ranking for “poor weather” from utility cyclists may reflect the fact that, as they are already using cycling as a mode of transport, many have already overcome or avoided issues around logistics (carrying goods, topography, distance etc) that those who aren’t already cycling for local journeys have not been able to solve.

Below is the full response set from this question, with a further focus on specific aspects of barriers in the following sections.



\*These options were not offered to those who already cycled.

Figure 26 Barriers to cycling, full list of options

### 5.2.1 Safety

Road safety was the most significant barrier highlighted by respondents to more local journeys by bike, whether from people who already cycle or those who do not. It came highest in the list of issues that people faced (figure 26) and also in a separate question focused on the experience of safety for cycling (figure 27).

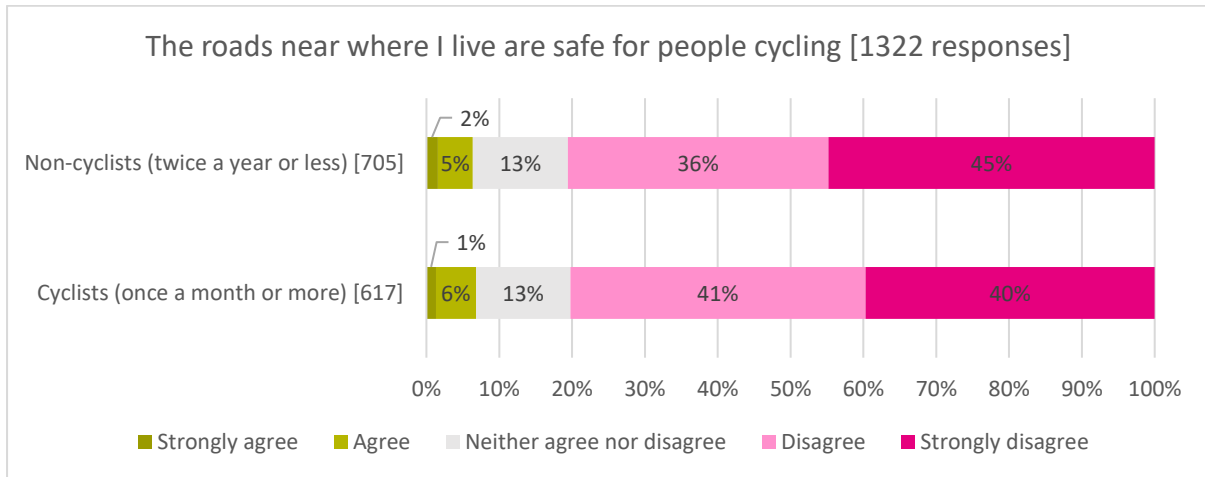


Figure 27 Roads are safe for cycling

Over 1,000 respondents left qualitative comments about cycling and a lack of safety. The majority of comments raised the amount and speed of traffic on local roads, narrow roads, steep hills, potholes, blind corners/reduced visibility and a lack of segregated cycle alternatives. There were a few comments about the behaviour of cyclists.

The comment below highlights a knock-on effect when roads are felt to be unsafe for cyclists:

*“The roads near Totnes e.g. Station Rd are often very busy with cars and lorries - this is unsafe for cyclists. As a result some cyclists ride on the pavement - I object to this as my mobility is reduced and I can’t get out of the way quickly when cyclists pass.”*

Female non-cyclist, walks for short local journeys, neutral on whether the area would be better if more people cycled.

### 5.3 Interest in cycling

For those who were currently not cycling more than twice a year, we asked about their general interest in the possibility of cycling. Despite the safety concerns already described, 45% said they would consider cycling for local journeys.

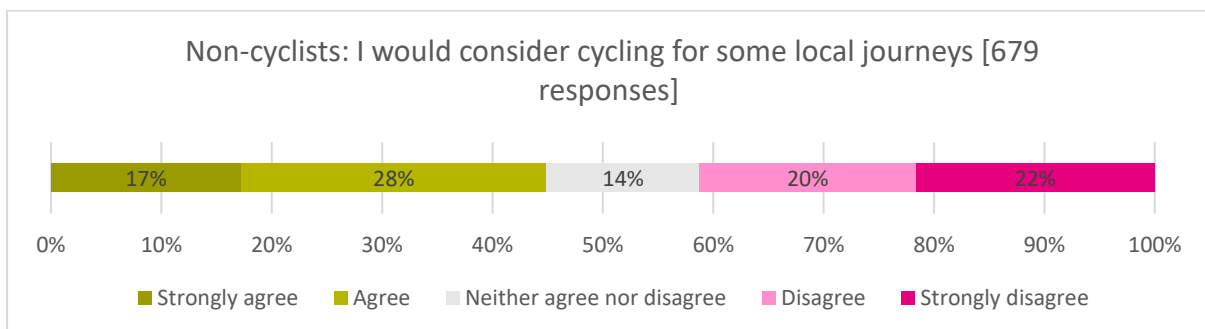


Figure 28 Non-cyclists that would consider cycling

When asked what could encourage them to cycle, non-cyclists said slower speeds (49%), better infrastructure (48%) and less traffic (39%) as their top options. While these infrastructure requirements were the most popular, social support and behaviour change interventions were also of relevance to many non-cyclists.

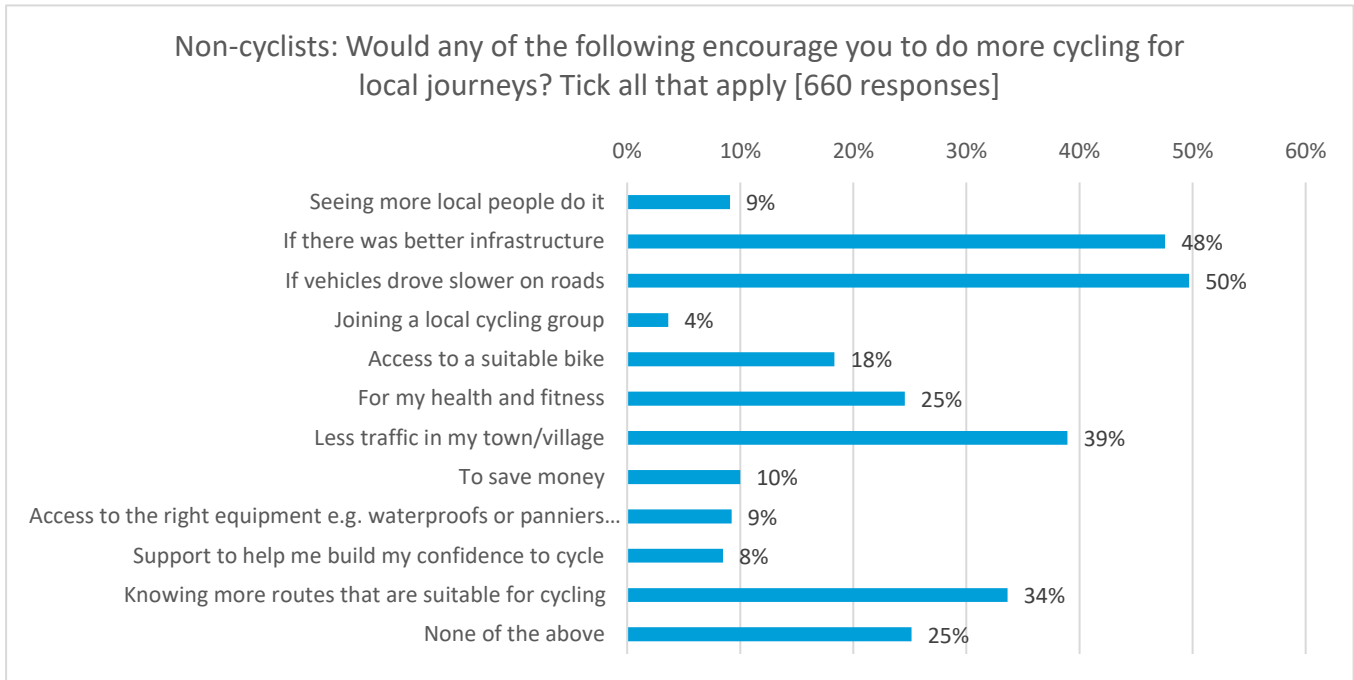


Figure 29 Encouraging non-cyclists to start cycling for local journeys

### 5.3.1 Routes knowledge

The high response (34%) on “knowing more routes that are suitable for cycling” from non-cyclists echoes the interest in cycling. Similarly, 42% of people already cycling for leisure but not for local journeys also said more route knowledge would encourage them.

Route knowledge awareness can be tackled through signage, local promotion and ensuring that when information about routes is shared, it highlights how the routes will assist people in accessing key local destinations.

### 5.3.2 Access to cycles and storage

- Lack of access to a bike was the fourth biggest issue raised by those who did not currently cycle (37%) (figure 26), with 18% saying access to a suitable cycle would encourage them to cycle (figure 29)
- 1 in 5 non-cyclists felt they had nowhere convenient or secure to store a bike (figure 26)

Both of these “opportunity” barriers can be addressed in a range of ways, including bike share or loan schemes, bike storage provision, bike marking with the police and other interventions to increase access to and security of cycles.

### 5.3.3 Confidence

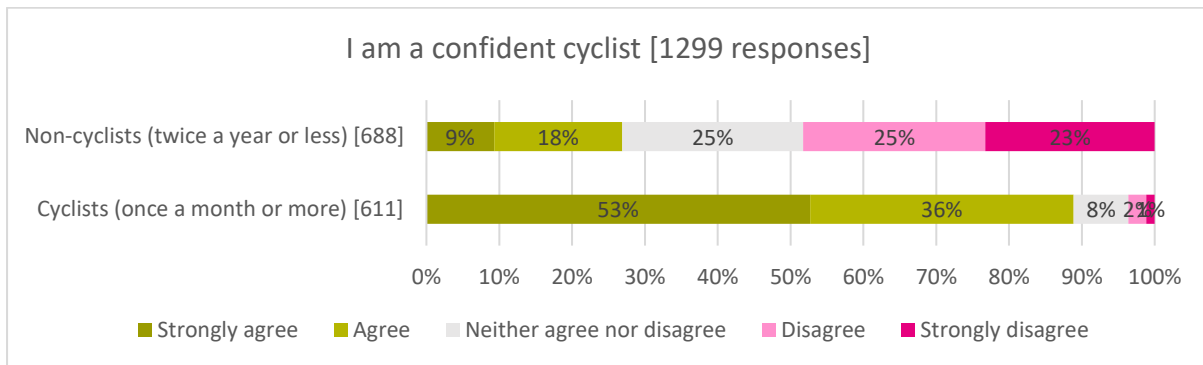


Figure 30 Cycle confidence

When asked specifically about cycling skills, 48% of non-cyclists did not see themselves as a confident cyclist. For some people, this may not be a significant barrier to cycling – either because they are willing to give it a go anyway, or because they have other more challenging issues (e.g. no access to a suitable bike, a health condition that precludes riding a standard cycle) which means cycle confidence is not their primary concern. However, “Not feeling confident to cycle” was identified by 1 in 5 non-cyclists as a specific barrier to them cycling (figure 26), with around 1 in 10 seeing “support to help me build my confidence to cycle” as an element in encouraging them to start cycling (figure 29).

### 5.3.4 Social norms

Through a range of questions we explored how socially acceptable and culturally normalised respondents felt cycling to be.

Just over a third of cyclists felt that cycling was something typical within their social circle, with 44% feeling that most people they know did not cycle regularly. Only 18% of non-cyclists felt that they knew many people who cycled regularly.

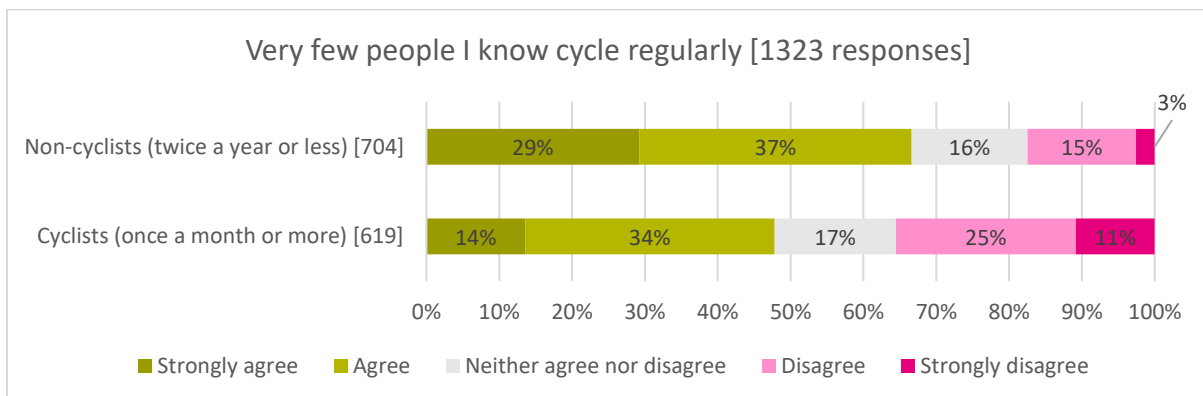


Figure 31 Knowing many people who cycle

Specifically for those who did not already cycle, we asked further questions around how they viewed themselves in relation to cycling.

A quarter of non-cyclists felt that they were “not the kind of person who rides a bike” (26%). For some respondents, comments left indicated this was to do with feeling that they were too old or experiencing limiting health conditions that would preclude them from cycling.

*“I haven't ridden a bike since 1966 and have no intention of starting again now!”*

Female, aged 75, Okehampton, uses a mobility scooter.

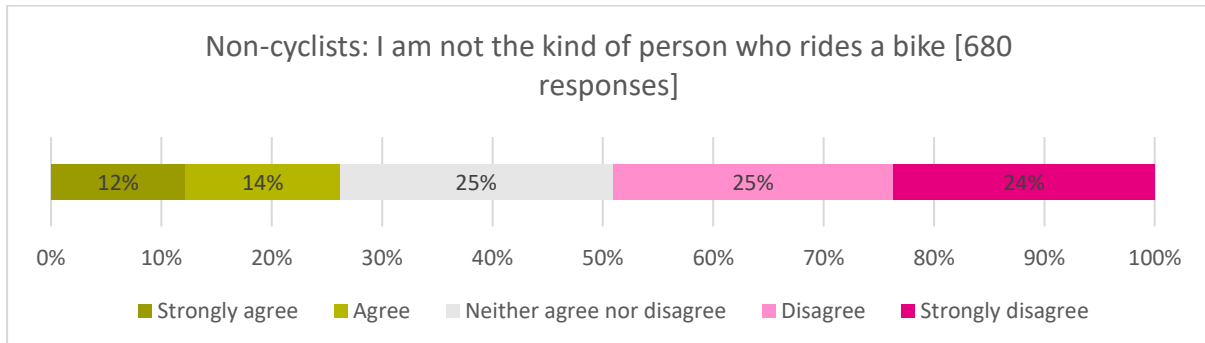


Figure 32 The kind of person who rides a bike

However, only a small minority (7%) felt that it would be embarrassing or awkward to be seen cycling. 9% of non-cyclists thought that seeing more local people cycle would also encourage them to cycle (figure 29).

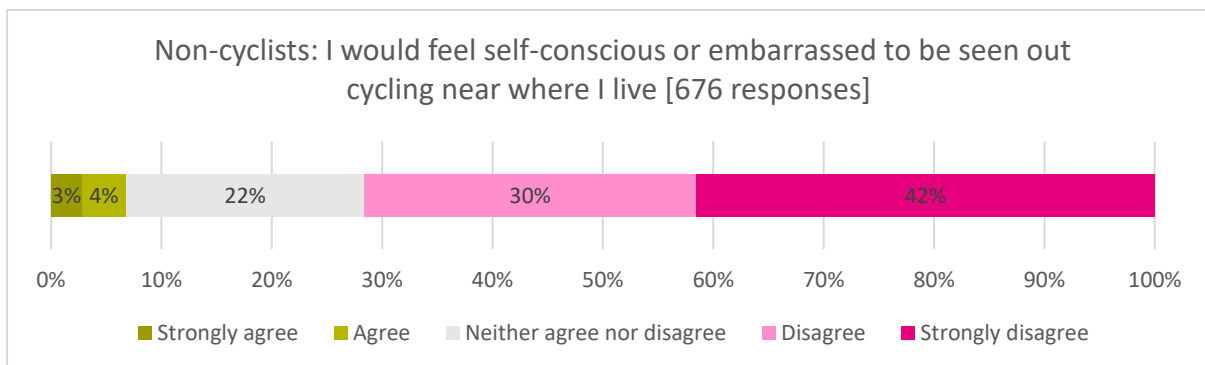


Figure 33 Social attitudes to cycling

## 6 Experience of existing cyclists

The survey collected significant numbers of responses from people already cycling in the area, both for leisure and for utility journeys. While these individuals make up a small proportion of the total population, their experiences provide important insights into the reality of using the local transport network by bike.

Figure 26 demonstrated that many of barriers that have stopped more people cycling are experienced by those already cycling, with road safety as the key concern.

Unsurprisingly, leisure cyclists were more likely than non-cyclists to be open to considering cycling for local journeys (85%), and were less likely to think that they might feel self-conscious or embarrassed about being seen cycling for local journeys.

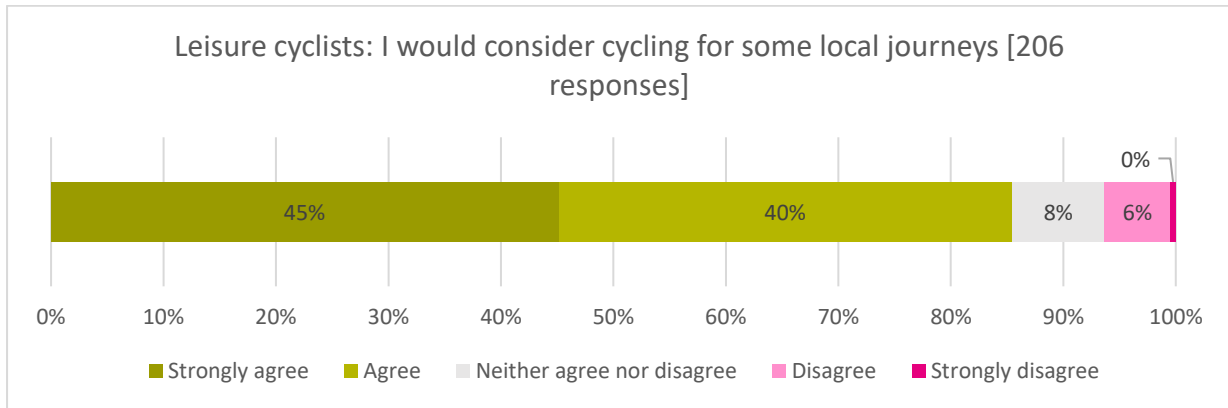


Figure 34 Leisure cyclists willingness to utility cycle

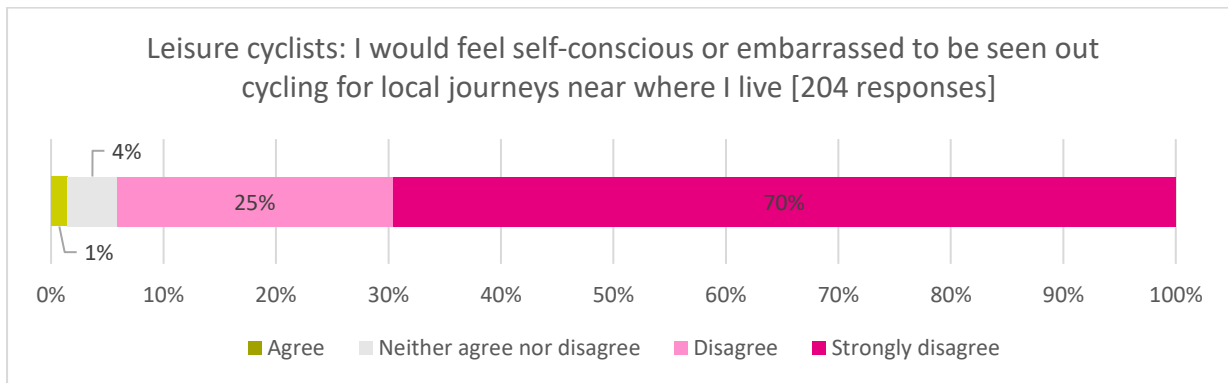


Figure 35 Leisure cyclists embarrassment for utility cycling

## 6.1 Benefits of utility cycling

We asked existing utility cyclists why they chose to cycle for local journeys. Health, the environment and convenience were the top three responses.

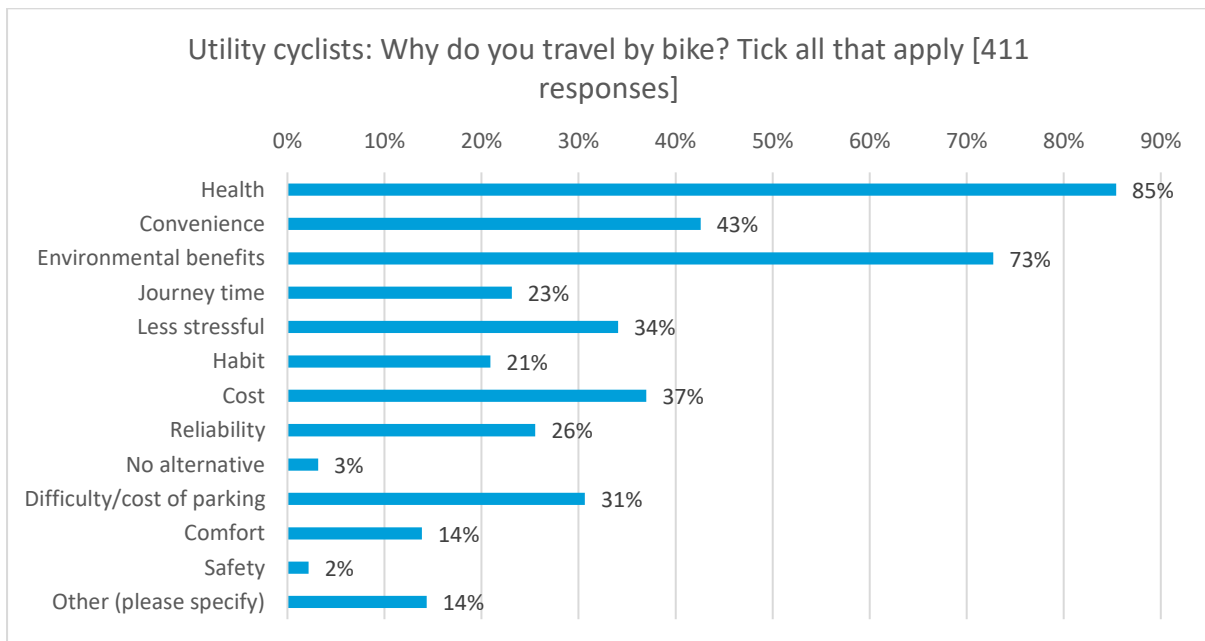


Figure 36 Why utility cyclists travel by bike



Almost all of the comments in “other” mentioned enjoyment or fun, with other individual comments mentioning avoiding car parking issues, not being able to drive due to a disability, “as an example to others” and to help keep their children active.

## 7 Interviews and public events summary

Alongside the large survey response, we undertook a smaller number of public events and interviews. These were organised and conducted in July and August 2023 to ensure we heard from underrepresented or “harder to reach” parts of the local community. Potential target populations were identified by the Councils and Cycling UK as being those typically underrepresented in walking and cycling opinion data and/or having specific mobility needs. These included children and young people, families, disabled people, older people, people experiencing poverty, residents of West Devon and women.

Due to the high volume of survey responses received, the targeted interviews and events were focused towards young people, families, residents of West Devon, disabled people and people experiencing poverty. Nine interviews, one “walking & wheeling conversation” and two public events were conducted.

### 7.1 Interview summary

Interviews with stakeholder organisations were conducted online, on the telephone or face to face. One interview was conducted as a walking conversation to identify lived experiences of service users.

Organisation	Specific target group	Location	Council area
So Social	People experiencing poverty, isolation	Ivybridge	South Hams
Tavistock Youth Cafe	11-19 year olds	Tavistock	West Devon
Devon Communities Together (Project manager, “Connecting You” tackling loneliness with transport pilot)	People with disabilities, people experiencing poverty, isolation	West Devon & South Hams	West Devon & South Hams
Devon Communities (Deputy CEO)	People with disabilities, people experiencing poverty, isolation	West Devon & South Hams	West Devon & South Hams
Tavistock Area Support Services (Manager)	Disabled people, people living with mobility issues	Tavistock	West Devon
Tavistock Area Support Services (Volunteer)	Disabled people, people living with mobility issues	Tavistock	West Devon
Tavistock Area Support Services (Service user) and Transition Tavistock (Member)	Disabled people, people living with mobility issues	Tavistock	West Devon
Kingsbridge & Salcombe Libraries	Families, people experiencing poverty	Kingsbridge & Salcombe	South Hams

Tavistock, Princetown and Moretonhampstead Libraries	Families, people experiencing poverty, residents of West Devon	Tavistock, Princetown and Moretonhampstead	West Devon
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## 7.2 Interview methodology and themes

A thematic analysis was conducted on the interview data to discover commonalities amongst stakeholder viewpoints and the groups they represent. A structured analytical process is being applied to ensure the themes found present comprehensive understanding of the communities represented. The analytical process involves; transcribing all interview verbatim; initial listening and coding each transcript separately; theming each transcript separately; bringing initial themes together from all transcripts and grouping into secondary themes; conducting a third level of thematic analysis to form a higher level of themes. These final themes summarise commonalities across all interviews.

Emergent themes include:

1. Awareness – A lack of awareness that different transport modes are used and needed, with events and targeting audiences suggested as ways to raise awareness.
2. Community - There are a number of community groups who are well placed and willing to be catalysts in supporting transport needs and helping to solve problems with creative ideas.
3. Quality of Life - People are forced to behave in maladaptive ways because of a lack of travel provision and support.

*“Somebody like me in particular [wheelchair user], I go on the road. I try and avoid the pavements because there's too many people, and I can't get them to shift and they won't move, so I have to go on the road.”*

Service user, Tavistock Area Support Services

4. Inclusivity - There is strong sense that transport is not inclusive across all areas.

*“One lady I know would like to walk more. She'd like to set herself a goal and say, ‘well, I'm going walk to that bench, because I know that bench is there.’ They want to push themselves to go for a bit of a longer walk, and knowing there's going to be a bench there where they can sit and rest, before they go on.”*

Staff member, So Social Ivybridge.

5. Training - There is a desire to upskill, train and teach people how to travel around differently and not assume people know.

*“It is surprising and I'm continuously shocked because teenagers who we support, even 13-year-olds who should be absolutely capable [of walking], are tired out really quickly and they admit themselves, they're just not used to it [walking]. And when we've taken young people up*

*onto Dartmoor and gradually built their fitness levels up, some of them have found they absolutely love walking, but they didn't know they loved walking before."*

Staff member, Tavistock Youth Café

### 7.3 Events summary

Tavistock Area Support Services hosted Cycling UK to meet a service user and volunteer. With the consent of both individuals, this data was collected as interviews, listed above. The group held a “walking and wheeling conversation” in the town centre to explore barriers and enablers for wheelchair users and people with reduced mobility in a practical setting.

Other public events made use of the local library network to host accessible activities and face to face conversations in an indoor, informal environment. Individuals were invited to chat about themes also collected through the survey, responding verbally or on post-it notes and paper in their own words or drawings.

Location	Attendees	Town	Council area
Tavistock town centre walking & wheeling conversation	Volunteer and service user from Tavistock Area Support Services hub	Tavistock	West Devon
Ivybridge Library	Around 30 people, mix of teenagers, young families and older people	Ivybridge	South Hams
Kingsbridge Library	Around 15 people, mix of young families and older people	Kingsbridge	South Hams



Figure 37 Ivybridge library event table and written responses

Analysis is ongoing of interview and event responses and will enhance the survey data presented. The full dataset will inform the next stages of this project.

## 8 Conclusion

The large dataset collected through the online survey provides an insight into the experiences and views of people living in West Devon and South Hams. Road safety, traffic volumes and speeds, a lack of space and confidence all affect the comfort and accessibility of walking, wheeling and cycling for many local people. While walking or wheeling were not practical for all journeys, they were integrated into daily life as an ordinary way to get around that could be made more attractive and comfortable in towns and villages across the county areas. For cycling, access to bicycles is a further limiting factor for some residents, along with knowledge of routes and cycling skills.

While for many people, there were specific local journeys that could – at the moment – only be made by car, there was a widespread appreciation of the benefits of active travel for both personal health and the wider environment. A small minority of individuals felt strongly against walking, wheeling or cycling in their local circumstances, but for most people their feelings were either positive or neutral.

More in-depth exploration of experiences and barriers experienced by specific target groups (e.g. disabled people, younger people, people experiencing poverty) was conducted through interviews and events. Themes around a lack of inclusivity and consequential lower quality of live experiences were clear. Alongside this, organisations and individuals felt there was significant scope for improvement through improved infrastructure but also targeted support and information, with local organisations well-placed to provide opportunities for this. Further analysis and synthesis of interview and event data alongside the survey responses from these cohorts will inform the next stages of this project.

Together, the primary data will inform the behaviour change strategy being led by Cycling UK and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) being led by Phil Jones Associates on behalf of both Councils.